Voices in Disaster Risk Reduction from Bangladesh

Disaster Risk Reduction is a topic in good currency in South Asia. Bangladesh is leading in local and forward looking DRR activities.

Recently Dr. Mahbuba Nasreen of Dhaka University gave 10 Bangladesh TV (BTV) an overview of how Disaster Risk Reduction has taken leaps ahead in the recent past. Md. Mohsin, Director General of DDM, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, Government of Bangladesh joined Dr. Mahbuba. One of the main items she always underlines is the lead role of women in reducing risk. Those who have worked with women in disaster relief and rehabilitation also find this lead role effective and useful.

Experience across South Asia shows that when women lead the victims remain more motivated; there is more networking among victims; opportunities for collaboration open up; and in its own way women's leadership influences the decision making, bottom up.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) supported work of All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI) with groups of girls and groups of women teachers in school shows that these two groups are most crucial to make any school safer from disaster risks.

Dr. Anil Pokhrel of National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) of Nepal has highlighted the role of women in leading recovery after the 2015 earthquake in Nepal.

India has underlined the lead role of women in its National Disaster Management Plan launched in June 2016.

START Network's recent review of Accountability to the Affected Population in Assam, Odisha, and Kerala underlined that where women lead accountability to affected population at lowest level is higher.

What will be useful to do in South Asia is to have a national review of how women's leadership in relief and recovery promotes motivation, networking, collaboration, and policy influencing across humanitarian system.

Dr. Mahbuba Nasreen has rightly opened up an area to accelerate the implementation of Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in South Asia. ■

— **AIDMI Team**